

# Quarter Honoring “The Great Land,” A Shining Star For The Nation

August 29, 2008

**PALMER, Alaska** — The spotlight was on the Colony Stage at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer today as a crowd celebrated the ceremonial launch of the Alaska commemorative quarter-dollar coin. United States Mint Deputy Director Andrew Brunhart joined Alaska Lieutenant Governor Sean Parnell for the event.

“The bear gripping a salmon firmly in its jaws as it emerges from rapids captures the essence of your State,” Deputy Director Brunhart said of the Alaska quarter design. “When Americans pull this coin out of their pockets, they will think of Alaska—America’s last frontier.”

The Alaska quarter went into circulation nationwide on August 25, 2008. It will take about two weeks for most Americans to see the new quarter-dollars in their change. The United States Mint estimates that it will produce about 500 million Alaska quarters. After the ceremony, the public lined up to be among the first to exchange their currency for \$10 rolls of Alaska quarters. Deputy Director Brunhart and Lt. Governor Parnell handed out newly minted Alaska quarter-dollars to children who attended the ceremony.

On the eve of the launch, Brunhart hosted a free Public Coin Forum at the Alaska Heritage Museum in Anchorage. At the forum, members of the public expressed their opinions about future U.S. coinage designs.

Alaska became the 49th state on January 3, 1959. The quarter commemorating Alaska’s statehood is the 49th coin in the United States Mint’s 50 State Quarters Program. The reverse of the Alaska quarter features a grizzly bear emerging clutching a salmon in its jaws, symbolizing Alaska’s natural beauty and abundant wildlife. The North Star is depicted above the inscription “The Great Land.” Additional inscriptions are “Alaska” and “1959.”

Free United States Mint lesson plans about the Alaska quarter may be downloaded at [www.usmint.gov/kids](http://www.usmint.gov/kids).

[Click here](#) to see an image of the Alaska quarter.

A satellite feed including the Alaska quarter ceremonial launch, participant sound bites and production B-roll will be available on Friday, Aug. 29, 7 – 7:30 p.m. (ET), GA 28C, Tr. 19, DL 4080V; and Saturday, Aug. 30, 3 – 3:15 p.m. (ET), AMC 3c, Tr. 3, DL 3760H.

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